

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this pamphlet is to help you, the non-custodial parent, understand how the Division of Child Support Enforcement (DCSE) and its agents determine the balance of unpaid support.

This pamphlet provides answers to some commonly asked questions about this topic.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS:

What information is used by DCSE to determine the amount of unpaid support (arrear) owed on a case?

There are two basic pieces of information used to calculate whether or not a balance of unpaid support exists on a case.

First, we need a copy of all court orders.

Second, we need to know the pay history for the court order.

Does DCSE automatically receive a copy of all court orders for support?

No. DCSE only receives a copy of a court order when DCSE has been present at the hearing. If you go to court and an order is issued, but DCSE is not represented at the hearing, it is your responsibility to get a copy of that court order to DCSE.

Does DCSE automatically know about all payments I make on the court order?

No. DCSE can only know about payments that are made through the Arizona Clearinghouse. Support payments you have made directly to the other party, to another child support agency in another state, to a private collection agency, or to any address other than the Arizona Clearinghouse are not reported to DCSE.

How can I make sure that DCSE knows about payments that were not made to the Arizona Clearinghouse?

Your court order(s) tell you where to send your payments. If you have followed your court order and provide a copy of the court order to DCSE, then DCSE will request a pay history from where your court ordered payments were to be sent. DCSE will use this information to help determine the amount of unpaid support.

If you have made payments directly to the other parent, you must let DCSE know. DCSE will ask the other parent to sign an affidavit proving how much support you paid directly to them. DCSE can then give you credit for those payments. If the other parent denies receiving support payments directly from you, only a court will be able to determine if you should be given credit for such payments. You will need copies of checks, front and back, or copies of money orders you used to pay the other parent directly.

If you made payments to a private collection agency, and were not ordered to do so by the court, you need to obtain a pay history from that agency before DCSE can give you credit for any payments made. You must tell DCSE about the payments made to the private collection agency. DCSE may be able to contact the other parent and ask them to sign an affidavit giving you credit for the payments they received from the private collection agency.

Private collection agencies working for DCSE will always tell you to send your payment to the Arizona Clearinghouse.

If you made support payments to a child support agency in another state, you must tell DCSE where you sent these payments. DCSE may be able to contact the other state child support agency and request proof of the payments they received from you.

I have sent all my child support payments to the Arizona Clearinghouse and always paid my support but DCSE records show that there is an unpaid support balance. What can I do?

First, ask DCSE to send you a copy of their pay history. If all of your payments were made to the Arizona Clearinghouse, you can check the pay history to see if all of your payments are shown.

The full amount of your monthly court ordered support must have been received each month by DCSE. If all of your support payments were made in full and timely but DCSE records show an unpaid support balance, you should request a recalculation of your balance. DCSE will then send you a copy of the calculation that shows your unpaid balance.

My support payments have always been deducted from my paychecks. Why does DCSE show an unpaid support amount?

First, you should request a copy of your pay history. This will show you the payments that were made by your employer(s). It is possible that an employer did not pay the full monthly amount of support by deducting your payments from your paycheck. When an employer pays on a weekly or bi-weekly basis the amount deducted from your paycheck may not equal the monthly court ordered amount. You are responsible for the monthly amount ordered by the court regardless of how an employer deducts support from your paycheck. If DCSE does not receive the full amount in each month, your record will show an unpaid balance. When DCSE does not receive the full court ordered amount in a month, interest will be added to your unpaid support amount.

If you are paid weekly or bi-weekly and wish to know if the monthly amount of support has been paid, you may use the DCSE Interactive Voice Response system that is available 7 days a week, 24 hours a day. You can call 602-252-4045 or 1-800-882-4151.

I took custody of my children for whom I was paying support. Why do DCSE records show that I owe support?

If you did not go to court to get a legal change of custody order, DCSE must continue to enforce the court order for you to pay support. You also need a court order that stops the requirement for you to pay current support for the child(ren).

There was a legal change in custody of the child(ren) for whom I paid support. Why do DCSE records show that I have unpaid support?

DCSE has probably not received a copy of the order for the change in custody. Send a copy of this order to DCSE and ask for your case to be updated and a new calculation be done. You should also verify that your court order, changing the legal custody of your child(ren), states your requirement to pay current support has stopped. DCSE cannot stop collecting current support unless the court order says you do not owe current support. Also, any previously unpaid support is still owed by you.

The child(ren) for whom I was paying support now live with me. Why do DCSE records show that I have unpaid support?

If your original court order required you to pay support DCSE must enforce the court order. If you now have custody of the child(ren) but did not go to court to have the custody legally changed, DCSE must continue to enforce the original court order. You need to have the court issue an order to stop the current support and send a copy to DCSE.

I went to court and received a modification of my original order. Why don't DCSE records show the new amount of support?

DCSE may not have received a copy of the modification of the court order. Send a copy of this order to DCSE and ask that your case is updated and a new calculation of unpaid support is done.

How long will I need to continue to pay support for my child(ren)?

If your court order was issued in the state of Arizona, you must pay current support until your child(ren) emancipate(s). In the state of Arizona, the age of emancipation is 18 unless the child is still in high school. If the child is still in high school after the age of emancipation, current support is owed until the child graduates high school or turns 19, whichever happens first. Also, you will continue to owe any previous unpaid support even after the child has emancipated.

My child was legally adopted and the court order terminated my parental responsibility. Why is DCSE still enforcing the original support order?

You must provide a copy of the court order terminating your parental responsibility to DCSE. Your written consent to the termination is not sufficient. Until a copy of the order is received, DCSE must continue to enforce the court order for support. In addition, the court order that terminated your parental responsibilities will only stop your obligation to pay current support from the date of the order. Any unpaid support from the period before the child was adopted is still owed and must be paid. You may request a recalculation of your unpaid support balance for the period prior to the legal adoption of your child.

My child(ren) is/are deceased but DCSE is still collecting current support. What can I do?

You should send a copy of the death certificate to DCSE and request a recalculation of your unpaid support balance.

My court order states that payments are to be made in the currency common to the country where I reside. I disagree with the amount of unpaid support that DCSE records show. What can I do?

Send a copy of the court order to DCSE, along with proof of the foreign currency payments you made and request a recalculation of your unpaid support balance.

I am working outside the United States and continue to send my support payments to the Arizona Clearinghouse. DCSE records show that I have an unpaid amount of support. What can I do?

First, you should request that a copy of your pay history be sent to you. This will show what payments have been received from you.

If your court order was issued in the United States, the amount ordered is in U.S. dollars. If you have been sending foreign currency as payments for support you will be given credit for the U.S. dollars that your foreign currency equaled based on the conversion rate on the day that your payment was processed by the bank.

The pay history will show the amount of each of your payments. If a payment is missing, please send a copy of the cancelled check, front and back, and ask for a recalculation of your unpaid support.

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Department must make a reasonable accommodation to allow a person with a disability to take part in a program, service, or activity. For example, this means that if necessary, the Department must provide sign language interpreters for people who are deaf, a wheelchair accessible location, or enlarged print materials. It also means that the Department will take any other reasonable action that allows you to take part in and understand a program or activity, including making reasonable changes to an activity. If you believe that you will not be able to understand or take part in a program or activity because of your disability, please let us know of your disability needs in advance if at all possible. This document is available in alternative formats by contacting (602) 252-4045.

Local Area Child Support Offices:

**Apache County
DCSE Flagstaff Office**
Phone: (928) 527-0924
(800) 517-7365

**Cochise County Child
Support Services of AZ**
Warren Plaza
7 Bisbee Road, Suite D
Bisbee, AZ 85603
Phone: (520) 432-3161
Toll Free (866)358-0616

**Coconino County
Flagstaff DCSE Office**
Phone: (928) 527-0924
(800) 517-7365

**Gila County
Attorney’s Office
Child Support Division**
Phone: (928) 425-4464

**Graham County
Safford DCSE Office**
Phone: (928) 428-6648

**Greenlee County
Safford DCSE Office**
Phone: (928) 428-6648

**La Paz County
Attorney’s Office**
Phone: (928) 669-6469

**Maricopa County
All Local Offices**
Phone: (602) 252-4045
(800) 882-4151

**Navajo Nation
Department of Child
Support Services**
Phone: (520) 674-2300

**Navajo County
Attorney’s Office**
Phone: (928) 524-4730

**Pima County
Tucson DCSE Office**
Phone: (520) 622-7000

**Pinal County
Attorney’s Office**
Phone: (520) 868-6615

**Santa Cruz
Child Support Services
of Arizona**
Phone: (520) 761-4787

**Yavapai County Child
Support Services of
Arizona**
Phone: (928) 771-1090

**Yavapai Child Support
Services of Arizona**
Phone: (928) 639-3131

**Yuma County
Yuma DCSE Office**
Phone: (928) 539-1998

**Mohave County
Kingman DCSE Office**
Phone: (928) 753-3134

Department of Economic Security

**Division of Child Support
Enforcement**



How Much Do I Owe?

*When to Request a
Recalculation*

Equal Opportunity Employer/Program
Disponible en español
CSE-1084APAMNA (11-02)

